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ENG 3809-001: Contemporary British and Anglophone Literatures

Robert Martinez

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ENGLISH 3809: THE MAKING OF PUNK BRITANNIA

(aka English 3809: Contemporary British Literatures)
Spring 2017 | Coleman 3160 | MWF 11-11.50 AM

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Office Hours: Mon. & Fri., 2-4.30 PM and by appointment

Class Website: www.martinezliteraria.com/new3809 and D2L

Course Description:

English 3809 (3-0-3 credits, Group 3C) is a study “in fiction, poetry, and drama published since 1950 in one or more of the following countries: Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland).” In this course, we will explore the exciting genesis of new fictions and art forms that emerged in Britain after World War II. Specifically, we will look at how the punk explosion of 1976 serves as a galvanizing force that transforms not only contemporary British life but also Western society at large. Students will learn about the variety of economic, political, and social crises of our contemporary times (e.g., the political violence in Northern Ireland, the rise of Thatcherism, the eruption of race riots, the fears of nuclear warfare and the advent of global terrorism) as well as new developments in literary and artistic styles (e.g., radical experiments in postmodern and feminist writing, film, and thought; new developments in music after punk; startling criticism of race and “Britishness” through postcolonial theory). ☐☐

Not only will we study British writers, but we will also consider how other British artists use mediums such as drama, film, video, and music to explore and evaluate the vast socio-political and economic changes to their environment. Writers, filmmakers, and artists covered in the course may include J. G. Ballard, Angela Carter, Sarah Kane, David Mitchell, Mike Leigh, Derek Jarman, Sally Potter, and of course generous selections of contemporary music from the Sex Pistols and The Clash, to Joy Division and The Smiths, to Radiohead, Portishead, and Chvrches. Students will emerge from this course with a wider understanding of the intellectual, social, theoretical, and popular forces at work that have shaped our present moment.

This course is writing intensive and requires a shorter analysis paper, a research term paper, several online forum posts and in-class writing exercises, active class discussion, and midterm and final examinations. This course actively aims to prepare students to meet EIU’s university learning goals of critical thinking, writing and critical reading, speaking and listening, quantitative reasoning, and responsible citizenship. [This course is “Writing Intensive” and appeals to the following department themes: Identity & Culture; Law & Social Justice; Genre, Form & Poetics; Science & the Environment; Education & Society; Media, Technology & Popular Culture.]

Course Learning Goals:

- Students will understand various genres of literature written in English since 1950 in one or more of the following countries: Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.
- Students will identify the central literary innovations and tendencies of this period.
- Students will explain the social, historical, and cultural context of the period, through

readings and discussions of a number of selected literary works, political documents, popular music, historical research, and political philosophy.

- Students will work on their critical reading and critical thinking skills through intensive engagement with a variety of traditional and multimedia texts.
- Students will develop sophisticated research and argumentative skills through the completion of short analytical papers and response papers, examinations, and a longer research term paper.
- Students will enhance their writing skills by completing revisions of analytical papers.
- Students will diversify their critical thinking and professional writing skills and global consciousness by studying material from a variety of disciplines.
- Students will understand specific nuances of gender, sexuality, and identity being explored by British thinkers and artists through literature, philosophy, film, and music.

Required Texts:

- Herbert Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance" (from *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*, 1965) – D2L
- J. G. Ballard, *Crash* (1973) - TRS
- Martin Amis, *Dead Babies* (1975) - TRS
- Angela Carter, *The Passion of New Eve* (1977) - TRS
- Pat Barker, *Blow Your House Down* and *Union Street* (1984) - TRS
- David Mitchell, *Black Swan Green* (2006) - TRS
- Margaret Thatcher, "To Conservative Rally, Cheltenham" (July 1982) – D2L
- Paula Hawkins, *The Girl on the Train* (2015) – D2L
- Derek Raymond, *The Devil's Home on Leave* (1985) – D2L

Possible Additional Texts (D2L):

- Martin McDonagh, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (2001)
- Sarah Kane, *Blasted* (1995)

Required Films:

- Alan Clarke, *Elephant*
- Andrea Arnold, *Wasp* (2003) or *Fish Tank* (2009)
- Peter Greenaway, *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, & Her Lover* (1989)

Required Music:

- Sex Pistols, *Never Mind the Bollocks* LP (1977)
- Joy Division, *Closer* LP (1980)
- The Cure, *Pornography* LP (1982)
- The Specials, *Ghost Town* EP (1981)
- The Smiths, *Meat Is Murder* LP (1984)
- Generous selections from the punk, post-punk, synth-electronica, new wave music scenes (all music available via class web site: <http://www.martinezliteraria.com/new3809>)

Reading and Listening Study for Class:

You are required to do all assigned reading for this course. More importantly, you are expected to read all assignments **carefully** and **conscientiously**, meaning you are to make note of your reactions to the readings and be prepared to share your critical thoughts of the readings. If you do not understand something in the reading, you should read it again and work at its meaning. This process is what is known as "critical reading": you must study a writer's language and think critically about its meanings and ramifications. This critical, thoughtful attention to detail applies

equally to any audio/visual texts (music, film) we study: pay careful attention to sounds, melody, lyrics, camera movement, editing, use of color, etc., and think carefully about their meaning.

The texts listed above are available from Textbook Rental (TRS). Other required readings will be available online via our course page on D2L. All music and lyrics will be available via our personal class website (martinezliteraria.com/new3809) and all films will be screened in class and made available, when possible, via D2L. On the day that a text is to be discussed, you must have that work with you in class. For **electronic readings (PDF or Web documents)**, you must have **readable access to those documents in class on the day the material is discussed**. Since this course emphasizes careful reading and writing, you must either **print out** the document(s) or use a laptop, desktop, iPad, Kindle, or Nook to view them. ***Using Smartphones to view readings for class discussion is not acceptable, unless directed to do so by the instructor.***

Content Warning:

Contemporary, and especially postmodern, texts often use violence and disturbing misappropriations of sex (rape and other forms of sexual abuse) as a way to get readers' attention and tell stories that represent realities and challenges they see in their worlds. Some of our texts may prove either emotionally painful for or morally offensive to you. If you are unwilling to read such material, please consider switching to another course. If you consider this literature worth reading but find yourself upset by it, always feel free to talk to me during my office hours, and to bring up your concerns during class if you are comfortable.

Required Attendance, Materials & Editions:

- Check Panthermail (e-mail) **daily**
- Visit custom class website frequently for music analysis (USE FIREFOX OR SAFARI BROWSERS)
- Use text editions found at Textbook Rental
- Attend class and participate **daily** in discussion
- Listen to all assigned music **carefully**
- Attend all film screenings
- Additional readings via handouts or D2L

Attendance in English 3809 means that you are present in class each day in both *body and mind*—that is, I expect you to come to class each day having completed any required reading or listening or viewing assignments and ready to share your thoughtful, considered ideas. **Missing class and not completing assignments are not acceptable.** If you become ill or experience family or personal difficulties beyond your control, then you must notify me of your absence as soon as possible. Not completing daily assignments and not contributing to class discussion will result in poor participation grade scores. If you miss more than three (3) classes, your final course grade will be penalized: starting with the fourth (4th) absence, a "+" or "-" will be deducted from your final course grade.

Smartphone/Social Media Policy:

To protect the safety of the classroom and the privacy of the students, usage of cell phones or smartphones during class to access social media sites or apps (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, YouTube, etc.) is strictly forbidden. Smartphone or cell phone use during class will only be permitted with the prior approval of the instructor.

Assignments:

All assignments, unless otherwise specified, are to be completed in Cambria or Times New Roman

12-point font, double-spaced, using MLA format.

- Paper #1 (6-8 pages/1,620-2,160 words): 20%
- Several Short D2L Forum Responses (250-500 words per post): 5%
- Group Music LP Presentation (4 groups): 10%
- Term paper (9-11 pages/2,430-2,900 words): 25%
- Attendance & Participation: 15%
- Midterm Exam: 10%
- Final Exam: 15%

Turning in Assignments & Feedback:

Assignments turned in via D2L Dropbox must be in Microsoft Word format. Instructor feedback will be embedded in graded writing. For revision writing, you must consider and review instructor feedback thoroughly. When turning in any revised work, you must make sure that the instructor's feedback does **not** remain in your revised document.

Specific Assignments:

All papers should be double spaced, in 12-point, Cambria or Times New Roman font, with 1" (top/bottom) and 1.25" (left/right) margins. Make sure to include your name, course name, professor's name, and date on the front page; a title for your paper; and your name and page numbers in the headers of the paper. Submit all work electronically, in Microsoft Word format, in D2L Dropbox.

- **The Short Paper** (6-8 pages/1,600-2,100 words): You must choose to write about one of the texts (novel, play, film) we have covered in the first half of the course. You should identify a specific topic of interest to you in the novel and develop an argument that interprets that aspect of the novel. For example, you may wish to discuss the treatment of a certain character or theme, the use of a recurring image, motif, or word/phrase in a given work, but make sure your topic is focused. Remember, this is a short paper that must present a convincing interpretation of the work you have chosen. Outside research is not required for this paper; it should simply be your analysis of the text(s) at hand.
- **The Term Paper** (9-11 pages/2,430-2,900 words): This paper requires you to develop a research project around a specific idea or theme related to the course. Close analysis of your texts is of course a must--the core component of the essay is your interpretive argument. You may choose to build a larger project out of ideas from your first paper, but you cannot simply reuse or "copy and paste" work from your first paper into your term project. Outside research is required for this paper (at least three or more academic or professional sources). You may choose to develop a non-conventional project (performance, video essay, website, etc.), but please seek approval from me regarding your project idea first. You must cite your sources in MLA format.
- **D2L Forum Posts:** Throughout the semester I will require each student to write a short critical response to the many bands/music artists we will study, as well as the texts or films we will study. Each post will require you to engage in closer analysis of course material in order to augment and enhance class discussion.

A Note about Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of someone else's ideas, words, or work as your own. If you use or refer to ideas or work other than your own, you must acknowledge the source and author of those ideas/that work and document it properly using MLA format (Purdue MLA

guide: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>). Plagiarism is an Honor Code violation at EIU, and offenders will be referred to the EIU Office for Student Standards. **Failure to cite any outside sources or critics will constitute plagiarism.**

Grading Scale:

- A = 94-100
- A- = 90-93
- B+ = 87-89
- B = 84-86
- B- = 80-83
- C+ = 77-79
- C = 74-76
- C- = 70-73
- D = 64-69
- F = 63 and below

Most assignments will receive letter grades. For shorter assignments, the following check-mark system will be used:

- √+ = Excellent work that is strongly engaged, on-topic, and very well-written.
- √ = Satisfactory work that is on-topic and cleanly written.
- √- = Below average work that shows little engagement, is off-topic, and is hurriedly and poorly written.

Student Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

Disability Services:

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call [217-581-6583](tel:217-581-6583).

Student Success Center:

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call [217-581-6696](tel:217-581-6696), or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Tech Support

If you need assistance with D2L, call D2L Support toll free at 1-877-325-7778. Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. E-mail and Chat options are also available on the "My Home" page after logging in to D2L. Other D2L resources including a D2L Orientation course for students are available on the same page. For technical questions regarding other software, hardware, network issues, EIU NetID/password, or Panthermail, please contact the ITS Helpdesk at 217-581-4357 during regular business hours (8 am-5 pm) or submit a help ticket at <https://techsupport.eiu.edu/>. If you have a question regarding course content, contact your instructor.

Tentative* Schedule for English 3809 – Spring 2017

*Some events/assignments subject to change

Note: Forum responses to music must be completed before the day music is discussed in class.

Date	What's Happening in Class	What to Do for Next Class
M-1/9	Introduction to course and assignments Background to Post-war Britain culture, literature, and music	- Start reading Herbert Marcuse's essay, "Repressive Tolerance" (handout/on D2L, pp. 81-101) - Listen to "Pre-Punk Influences"
W-1/11	- Wrap up background discussion - Discuss early music influences - Start discussion on Marcuse	- Finish reading Marcuse essay (pp. 102-123) - Review "Studying Popular Music - Theoretical Background" handout
F-1/13	Discuss Marcuse's essay	- Review your Marcuse reading—read carefully! - Start listening to the Sex Pistols's LP, <i>Never Mind the Bollocks</i>
M-1/16	No Class – Martin Luther King Day	- Review Marcuse's essay - Finish listening to Sex Pistols album and complete forum post
W-1/18	- Conclude discussion of Marcuse - Discuss Sex Pistols's <i>Never Mind the Bollocks</i>	Start reading Ballard, <i>Crash</i> (pp. 7-50)
F-1/20	Discuss <i>Crash</i>	Continue reading <i>Crash</i> (pp. 51-138)
M-1/23	Discuss <i>Crash</i>	- Finish <i>Crash</i> (pp. 139-224) - Start listening to music inspired by <i>Crash</i> (i.e., "Crash Music": The Normal, Gary Numan, John Foxx, Human League)
W-1/25	Finish discussion of <i>Crash</i>	Complete forum post on music related to <i>Crash</i>
F-1/27	Discuss music inspired by <i>Crash</i>	- Start listening to Joy Division LP, <i>Closer</i> and other selected songs (TBA in class) - Complete D2L forum post on Joy Division - Start reading Carter's <i>Passion of New Eve</i> (pp. 5-41)
M-1/30	Discuss <i>Passion of New Eve</i>	Read <i>Passion of New Eve</i> (pp. 42-62)
W-2/1	Group presentation #1 on Joy Division's <i>Closer</i> and discussion	Read <i>Passion of New Eve</i> (pp. 63-101)
F-2/3	Discuss <i>Passion of New Eve</i>	Read <i>Passion of New Eve</i> (pp. 102-152)
M-2/6	Discuss <i>Passion of New Eve</i>	- Finish <i>Passion of New Eve</i> (pp. 153-191) - Start listening to selected songs by Au Pairs and Siouxsie & The Banshees (TBA in class)
W-2/8	Discuss <i>Passion of New Eve</i>	Complete forum post on Au Pairs and Siouxsie & The Banshees
F-2/10	- Finish discussion of <i>Passion of New Eve</i> - Discuss music	Start reading Barker's <i>Blow Your House Down</i> (pp. 247-307)
M-2/13	Discuss <i>Blow Your House Down</i>	Read <i>Blow Your House Down</i> (pp. 308-368)

W-2/15	Discuss <i>Blow Your House Down</i>	Finish reading <i>Blow Your House Down</i> (pp. 369-416)
F-2/17	No Class – Lincoln’s Day	
M-2/20	Finish discussing <i>Blow Your House Down</i>	Start reading Mitchell’s <i>Black Swan Green</i> (pp. 3-43)
W-2/22	Start discussing Mitchell’s <i>Black Swan Green</i>	Read <i>Black Swan Green</i> (pp. 44-94)
F-2/24	Discuss <i>Black Swan Green</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read <i>Black Swan Green</i> (pp. 95-119) - Listen to music responses to the Falklands War via the class website - Read sailors’ narratives about the war via Falklands War webpage on class site
M-2/27	Discuss <i>Black Swan Green</i> , music about the war, and sailors’ narratives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Margaret Thatcher’s speech, “To the Conservative Rally at Cheltenham” (available via D2L) - Watch brief video interviews of Thatcher discussing the Falklands War
W-3/1	Discuss <i>Black Swan Green</i> and Thatcher’s speech	Read <i>Black Swan Green</i> (pp. 120-160)
F-3/3	Discuss <i>Black Swan Green</i>	Read <i>Black Swan Green</i> (pp. 161-241)
M-3/6	Discuss <i>Black Swan Green</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finish reading <i>Black Swan Green</i> (pp. 242-294) - Listen to The Specials’s <i>Ghost Town</i> EP
W-3/8	Finish discussion of <i>Black Swan Green</i>	Complete forum post on The Specials’s EP
F-3/10	Group presentation #2 on The Specials Discussion	Paper #1 Due (in D2L Dropbox) by Saturday, 3/11
3/13-3/17	No Class – Spring Break	
M-3/20	Midterm Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to selections from Echo & The Bunnymen, Tears for Fears, New Order, Depeche Mode, The Sound, Gang of Four - Complete forum post
W-3/22	Discuss music of Echo & The Bunnymen, Tears for Fears, New Order, Depeche Mode, The Sound, Gang of Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen to The Cure’s LP, <i>Pornography</i> - Complete forum post
F-3/24	Group presentation #3 on The Cure’s LP, <i>Pornography</i> Discussion	Start reading Paula Hawkins’s <i>The Girl on the Train</i> , pp. 1-30
M-3/27	Watch Arnold’s <i>Fish Tank</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study film - Read <i>The Girl on the Train</i>, pp. 31-61
W-3/29	Watch Arnold’s <i>Fish Tank</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study film - Read <i>The Girl on the Train</i>, pp. 62-92

F-3/31	Finish <i>Fish Tank</i> and discuss	- Study film - Read <i>The Girl on the Train</i> , pp. 93-123
M-4/3	Start discussion of <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	Read <i>The Girl on the Train</i> , pp. 124-174
W-4/5	Discuss <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	Read <i>The Girl on the Train</i> , pp. 175-225
F-4/7	Discuss <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	- Read <i>The Girl on the Train</i> , pp. 226-276 - Start listening to The Smiths's <i>Meat Is Murder</i> LP
M-4/10	Discuss <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	Finish reading <i>The Girl on the Train</i> , pp. 277-336
W-4/12	Discuss <i>The Girl on the Train</i>	- Start reading Martin McDonagh's <i>The Lieutenant of Inishmore</i> (pp. 1-40) - Complete forum post on The Smiths
F-4/14	- Group presentation #4 on The Smiths's <i>Meat Is Murder</i> , discussion - Discuss <i>The Lieutenant of Inishmore</i>	Read McDonagh's <i>The Lieutenant of Inishmore</i> (pp. 41-91)
M-4/17	Discuss <i>The Lieutenant of Inishmore</i>	Finish McDonagh's <i>The Lieutenant of Inishmore</i> (pp. 92-144)
W-4/19	Discuss <i>The Lieutenant of Inishmore</i>	
F-4/21	Watch Clarke's <i>Elephant</i>	
M-4/24	Discuss <i>Elephant</i>	
W-4/26	TBA	Finish up your term paper!
F-4/28	Course evals Term Paper Due (via D2L) by 5 PM	

Final Examination: Tuesday, May 2, 12:30-2:30 p.m.